

**What makes you feel:**



Sad



Tired



Lonely

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**When I grow up, I want to be...**



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**What music do you like, and what do you like about it?**



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**What makes you feel:**



Happy



Excited



Safe

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**Who do you feel most safe with, and why?**

**SAFE  
ZONE**

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**A favourite memory...**



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**A favourite movie or TV show, and why?**



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**Who do you turn to when you're hurting, and why?**



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**What makes you feel:**



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**A joke or experience that made you laugh...**



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**What is your earliest memory?**



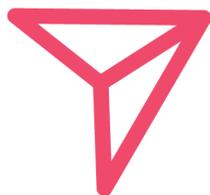
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**My family and life at home...**



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**What else would be helpful to share?**



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**A story you heard about you as a baby...**



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**Hobbies and Chores...**



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**What is your biggest fear?**



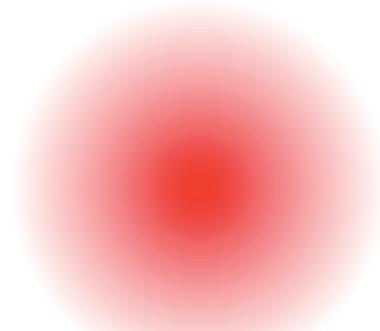
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**What makes you feel:**



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**Have you ever wanted to hurt yourself?**



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**If you could be an animal for a day, which one and why?**



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**Friendships and other relationships...**



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**Meals and snacks...**



**FOOOD!!!**

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**Sleeping and dreaming...**



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**My life at school...**



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**Which superpower would you wish for, and why?**



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**A time you  
did not feel  
safe...**



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**What helps  
when you are  
upset?**



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**Who is  
someone you  
admire, and  
why?**



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# How to Use These Conversation Cards

A gentle guide for whānau, teachers, therapists, and youth workers supporting older children and teens. These cards were thoughtfully created by a psychologist to support young people in opening up, expressing their thoughts, and building emotional awareness. You don't need to be a professional to use them—just someone who cares.

Here's how to make the most of them.

## ✅ 1. Create a Safe, Calm Space

Start by creating an environment where the young person feels comfortable. This could be at the dinner table, in the car, during a walk, or even snuggled up on the couch. You don't need a formal setup—just warmth, patience, and presence. Assure them that anything you discuss is confidential, unless someone's safety is at risk, in which case you'll need to involve others to provide help.

## 📄 2. Let Them Pick A Card

- Lay out a few and let the young person choose what feels right
- Shuffle and draw one at random
- Let them choose a card that fits the mood or moment

Let it feel casual—this isn't a quiz or a test.

## 💬 3. Start a Conversation, Not an Interrogation

Read the prompt aloud and give the young person space to think. There's no pressure to answer straight away—or even at all. You can share your own thoughts first to model how it's done. Some prompts may lead to deep discussion, others to a quick laugh—and both are valuable.

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#### 4. Focus on Connection, Not “Fixing”

The goal isn't to find solutions or “fix” how someone feels. It's to connect, listen, and create a space where emotions and experiences are seen and heard.

#### 5. Use Them Regularly, but Gently

You might use one card each day or a few once a week. Keep it flexible. The more often you use them, the easier these conversations will become. Repeating cards is fine too—each answer might be different depending on the day.

#### Extra Ideas

- Therapists can use these in the assessment phase with a young client.
- Group use: In classrooms or youth groups, use a card to spark a circle-time discussion or journaling exercise.
- Solo use: Older kids and teens can use these as journal prompts on their own.
- “Just in case” kit: Print a few and keep them handy for tough days or awkward silences.

#### What Matters Most

You're showing up. You're listening. You're making space for real conversations. That alone makes a difference.

## **What if you need more support for your child/young person?**

Check out Anxiety NZ's resources here <https://anxiety.org.nz/kids>

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# Printing Your Conversation Cards

Tips for printing at home or with a local printer

These cards are designed to be printed and used again and again—whether you're using them at home, in a classroom, or on the go.

## Option 1: Print at Home

Recommended settings:

- Paper size: A4 or US Letter
- Paper type: Heavier paper or card stock (145-200 gsm works well)
- Print quality: Choose “Best” or “High” for sharp text and colour

After printing:

- Cut along the trim lines
- Optional: Laminate for durability (see below)

## Option 2: Local or Online Printer

You can also take the file to your local print shop (or upload it to an online printer).

Ask for:

- Single-sided colour printing
- Matte or silk finish card (approx. 250–300gsm) or laminated if you prefer
- Trimmed to size (or you can trim yourself)

# Printing Your Conversation Cards

Optional: Laminate for Durability

At home:

- Use a standard laminator and A4/A5 laminating pouches
- Trim the cards after laminating, leaving a small border to seal the edges

Why laminate?

- Makes the cards sturdier
- Protects them from spills or sticky fingers
- Great for reusing in group settings

Storage Tips

- Store in a small box, snap-lock bag, or elastic band
- You can sort them by category or theme if you use them often
- Keep them somewhere visible to encourage regular use (e.g., coffee table, classroom drawer, whānau shelf)

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